

REMARKS

In the Final Office Action mailed on February 4, 2008, the Office took the following action: (1) rejected claims 12-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Selig et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,492,978 (hereinafter "Selig") in view of Nasu, U.S. Patent No. 7,116,313 (hereinafter "Nasu"); (2) rejected claims 12-14 and 16-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraus et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,776,546 (hereinafter "Kraus") in view of Nasu; (3) rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Selig in view of Nasu and in further view of Hanson et al., U.S. Patent No. 7,079,119; and (4) rejected claims 23-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kraus in view of Sevier et al., U.S. Patent No. 5, 729,394 (hereinafter "Sevier").

The Office indicated that claims 1-11 are allowed and that claim 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim. Applicant thanks the Office for the indication of allowable subject matter.

Applicant has amended claim 12 to incorporate recitations from claim 15 and canceled claims 15 and 23-26 without comment and without prejudice in order to expedite the issuance of the subject matter acknowledged as being allowable, and without prejudice to the filing of subsequent divisional or continuation applications to pursue allowance of one or more of the rejected claims. Claims 13-14 and 16-18 depend from claim 12 and are believed allowable at least for their dependency on allowable base claim 12. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections to claims 12-14 and 16-18.

Conclusion

Claims 1-14 and 16-18 are in condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and issuance of the subject application. If there are any remaining matters that may be handled by telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted,

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